

claim on any ground that the petitioner raised or reasonably could have raised during that inter partes review.

(2) CIVIL ACTIONS AND OTHER PROCEEDINGS.—The petitioner in an inter partes review of a claim in a patent under this chapter that results in a final written decision under section 318(a), or the real party in interest or privy of the petitioner, may not assert either in a civil action arising in whole or in part under section 1338 of title 28 or in a proceeding before the International Trade Commission under section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930 that the claim is invalid on any ground that the petitioner raised or reasonably could have raised during that inter partes review.

(Added Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4604(a)], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–569; amended Pub. L. 107–273, div. C, title III, §§13106(a), 13202(a)(4), (c)(1), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1900–1902; Pub. L. 112–29, §6(a), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 300.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930, referred to in subsec. (e)(2), is classified to section 1337 of Title 19, Customs Duties.

AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 112–29 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section related to appeals.

2002—Pub. L. 107–273, §13202(c)(1), made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 106–113, which enacted this section.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 107–273, §13106(a), reenacted heading without change and amended text generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “A third-party requester may—

“(1) appeal under the provisions of section 134 with respect to any final decision favorable to the patentability of any original or proposed amended or new claim of the patent; or

“(2) be a party to any appeal taken by the patent owner under the provisions of section 134, subject to subsection (c).”

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 107–273, §13202(a)(4), struck out “United States Code,” after “title 28,”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112–29 effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to any patent issued before, on, or after that effective date, with provisions for graduated implementation, see section 6(c)(2) of Pub. L. 112–29, set out as a note under section 311 of this title.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2002 AMENDMENT

Amendment by section 13106(a) of Pub. L. 107–273 applicable with respect to any reexamination proceeding commenced on or after Nov. 2, 2002, see section 13106(d) of Pub. L. 107–273, set out as a note under section 134 of this title.

ESTOPPEL EFFECT OF REEXAMINATION

Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, subtitle F, §4607], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–571, provided for estoppel from challenging certain facts determined during inter partes reexamination under former section 311 of this title and contained a severability provision.

§ 316. Conduct of inter partes review

(a) REGULATIONS.—The Director shall prescribe regulations—

(1) providing that the file of any proceeding under this chapter shall be made available to

the public, except that any petition or document filed with the intent that it be sealed shall, if accompanied by a motion to seal, be treated as sealed pending the outcome of the ruling on the motion;

(2) setting forth the standards for the showing of sufficient grounds to institute a review under section 314(a);

(3) establishing procedures for the submission of supplemental information after the petition is filed;

(4) establishing and governing inter partes review under this chapter and the relationship of such review to other proceedings under this title;

(5) setting forth standards and procedures for discovery of relevant evidence, including that such discovery shall be limited to—

(A) the deposition of witnesses submitting affidavits or declarations; and

(B) what is otherwise necessary in the interest of justice;

(6) prescribing sanctions for abuse of discovery, abuse of process, or any other improper use of the proceeding, such as to harass or to cause unnecessary delay or an unnecessary increase in the cost of the proceeding;

(7) providing for protective orders governing the exchange and submission of confidential information;

(8) providing for the filing by the patent owner of a response to the petition under section 313 after an inter partes review has been instituted, and requiring that the patent owner file with such response, through affidavits or declarations, any additional factual evidence and expert opinions on which the patent owner relies in support of the response;

(9) setting forth standards and procedures for allowing the patent owner to move to amend the patent under subsection (d) to cancel a challenged claim or propose a reasonable number of substitute claims, and ensuring that any information submitted by the patent owner in support of any amendment entered under subsection (d) is made available to the public as part of the prosecution history of the patent;

(10) providing either party with the right to an oral hearing as part of the proceeding;

(11) requiring that the final determination in an inter partes review be issued not later than 1 year after the date on which the Director notices the institution of a review under this chapter, except that the Director may, for good cause shown, extend the 1-year period by not more than 6 months, and may adjust the time periods in this paragraph in the case of joinder under section 315(c);

(12) setting a time period for requesting joinder under section 315(c); and

(13) providing the petitioner with at least 1 opportunity to file written comments within a time period established by the Director.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In prescribing regulations under this section, the Director shall consider the effect of any such regulation on the economy, the integrity of the patent system, the efficient administration of the Office, and the ability of the Office to timely complete proceedings instituted under this chapter.

(c) **PATENT TRIAL AND APPEAL BOARD.**—The Patent Trial and Appeal Board shall, in accordance with section 6, conduct each inter partes review instituted under this chapter.

(d) **AMENDMENT OF THE PATENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—During an inter partes review instituted under this chapter, the patent owner may file 1 motion to amend the patent in 1 or more of the following ways:

(A) Cancel any challenged patent claim.

(B) For each challenged claim, propose a reasonable number of substitute claims.

(2) **ADDITIONAL MOTIONS.**—Additional motions to amend may be permitted upon the joint request of the petitioner and the patent owner to materially advance the settlement of a proceeding under section 317, or as permitted by regulations prescribed by the Director.

(3) **SCOPE OF CLAIMS.**—An amendment under this subsection may not enlarge the scope of the claims of the patent or introduce new matter.

(e) **EVIDENTIARY STANDARDS.**—In an inter partes review instituted under this chapter, the petitioner shall have the burden of proving a proposition of unpatentability by a preponderance of the evidence.

(Added Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4604(a)], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–569; amended Pub. L. 107–273, div. C, title III, §13202(c)(1), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1902; Pub. L. 112–29, §6(a), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 302.)

AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 112–29 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section related to certificate of patentability, unpatentability, and claim cancellation.

2002—Pub. L. 107–273 made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 106–113, which enacted this section.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112–29 effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to any patent issued before, on, or after that effective date, with provisions for graduated implementation, see section 6(c)(2) of Pub. L. 112–29, set out as a note under section 311 of this title.

§ 317. Settlement

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—An inter partes review instituted under this chapter shall be terminated with respect to any petitioner upon the joint request of the petitioner and the patent owner, unless the Office has decided the merits of the proceeding before the request for termination is filed. If the inter partes review is terminated with respect to a petitioner under this section, no estoppel under section 315(e) shall attach to the petitioner, or to the real party in interest or privy of the petitioner, on the basis of that petitioner's institution of that inter partes review. If no petitioner remains in the inter partes review, the Office may terminate the review or proceed to a final written decision under section 318(a).

(b) **AGREEMENTS IN WRITING.**—Any agreement or understanding between the patent owner and a petitioner, including any collateral agreements referred to in such agreement or understanding, made in connection with, or in con-

templation of, the termination of an inter partes review under this section shall be in writing and a true copy of such agreement or understanding shall be filed in the Office before the termination of the inter partes review as between the parties. At the request of a party to the proceeding, the agreement or understanding shall be treated as business confidential information, shall be kept separate from the file of the involved patents, and shall be made available only to Federal Government agencies on written request, or to any person on a showing of good cause.

(Added Pub. L. 106–113, div. B, §1000(a)(9) [title IV, §4604(a)], Nov. 29, 1999, 113 Stat. 1536, 1501A–570; amended Pub. L. 107–273, div. C, title III, §13202(a)(5), (c)(1), Nov. 2, 2002, 116 Stat. 1901, 1902; Pub. L. 112–29, §6(a), Sept. 16, 2011, 125 Stat. 303.)

AMENDMENTS

2011—Pub. L. 112–29 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section related to restriction on subsequent request for inter partes reexamination.

2002—Pub. L. 107–273, §13202(c)(1), made technical correction to directory language of Pub. L. 106–113, which enacted this section.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 107–273, §13202(a)(5)(A), substituted “third-party requester nor its privies” for “patent owner nor the third-party requester, if any, nor privies of either”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 107–273, §13202(a)(5)(B), struck out “United States Code,” after “title 28,”.

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2011 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 112–29 effective upon the expiration of the 1-year period beginning on Sept. 16, 2011, and applicable to any patent issued before, on, or after that effective date, with provisions for graduated implementation, see section 6(c)(2) of Pub. L. 112–29, set out as a note under section 311 of this title.

§ 318. Decision of the Board

(a) **FINAL WRITTEN DECISION.**—If an inter partes review is instituted and not dismissed under this chapter, the Patent Trial and Appeal Board shall issue a final written decision with respect to the patentability of any patent claim challenged by the petitioner and any new claim added under section 316(d).

(b) **CERTIFICATE.**—If the Patent Trial and Appeal Board issues a final written decision under subsection (a) and the time for appeal has expired or any appeal has terminated, the Director shall issue and publish a certificate canceling any claim of the patent finally determined to be unpatentable, confirming any claim of the patent determined to be patentable, and incorporating in the patent by operation of the certificate any new or amended claim determined to be patentable.

(c) **INTERVENING RIGHTS.**—Any proposed amended or new claim determined to be patentable and incorporated into a patent following an inter partes review under this chapter shall have the same effect as that specified in section 252 for reissued patents on the right of any person who made, purchased, or used within the United States, or imported into the United States, anything patented by such proposed amended or new claim, or who made substantial preparation therefor, before the issuance of a certificate under subsection (b).